DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The drawings are objected to as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(4) because reference character "20" on fig. 2 has been used to designate both tank body and silver foam. Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. Each drawing sheet submitted after the filing date of an application must be labeled in the top margin as either "Replacement Sheet" or "New Sheet" pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(d). If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Objections

2. The claims are objected to because they include reference characters which are not enclosed within parentheses.

Reference characters corresponding to elements recited in the detailed description of the drawings and used in conjunction with the recitation of the same element or group of elements in the claims should be enclosed within parentheses so as to avoid confusion with other numbers or characters which may appear in the claims. See MPEP § 608.01(m).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

> A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –
>
> (b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Japan publication no. 08-071339 to Akiko. Akiko describes a sterilization tank comprising a tank body (container 18); and a silver foam (filter can be silver of sort that is spongy or open cell) which is formed in foam pattern having a plurality of holes and is contained in the tank body. The silver foam is contained in a permeable housing (inner pipe 44 is porous). See fig. 1 and 3, abstract, and paragraphs 5-7 and 14.

5. Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. patent no. 3,268,444 to Renn. Renn describes a sterilization tank comprising a tank body (cartridge filter); and a silver foam (sponge silver film) which is formed in foam pattern having a plurality of holes and is contained in the tank body. The silver foam is contained in a permeable housing (sponge silver particles are on micro-filter). See column 1, line 32 to column 2, line 18.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to DOUGLAS J. THEISEN whose telephone number is (571)272-1168. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday 6:30 until 4:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Duane Smith can be reached on 571-272-1166. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Duane S. Smith/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 1797
10-22-08

djt